

JEREMIAH

THE WEEPING PROPHET

OVERVIEW

- * The name (Jeremiah) means **"The Lord throws"**
- * He was assisted by a scribe named Baruch, to whom Jeremiah dictated and who copied and had custody over the writings compiled from the prophet's messages (36:4, 32; 45:1).
- * The other prophets who lived during his lifetime were: Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Daniel and Ezekiel
- * Jeremiah is rightly considered among the major prophets. His book is longer than Isaiah and is also longer than either Ezekiel or the 12 Minor Prophets combined.
- * The Book of Jeremiah combines history, biography, and prophecy.

- * **Chapters: 52**
- * **Verses: 1364**

THE AUTHOR: JEREMIAH

The Jeremiah recounts more of his own life than any other prophet, telling of his ministry, the reactions of his audiences, testings, and his personal feelings.

1. Born of a priest in Anathoth, north of Jerusalem (Jer 1:1).
2. Chosen to be a prophet before he was born (Jer 1:5).
3. Called to the prophetic office while very young (Jer 1:6).
4. Commissioned (Jer 1:9, 10).
5. Jeremiah began prophesying in Judah halfway through the reign of Josiah (640-609 b.c.) and was mourned at his death (2 Chronicles 35:25).
6. He continued throughout the reigns of Jehoahaz (609), Jehoiakim (609-598), Jehoiachin (598-597) and Zedekiah (597-586).
7. Forbidden to marry because of the terrible times (Jer 16:1-4).
8. Jeremiah known as "The weeping Prophet" - His message broke his own heart (Jer 9:1).
9. He was a sensitive man, torn between his love of country and his dedication to God.

10. His messages of repentance at the temple were not well received (7:1-8:3; 26:1-11).
11. Although he preached God's word faithfully, he apparently had only two converts: Baruch, his scribe (32:12; 36:1-4; 45:1-5); and Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian eunuch who served the king (38:7-13; 39:15-18).
12. He was rejected by his people (Jer 11:18-21; 12:6; 18:18),
13. He was hated, beaten, put in stocks (Jer 20:1-3),
14. He was imprisoned (Jer 37:11-16), and charged with being a traitor.
15. At one point thrown into a muddy cistern, sinking into the filthy mire (38:6).
16. Wanted to resign but could not (Jer 20:9).
17. He saw the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity, and was permitted to remain in the land by the captain of the Babylonian forces.
18. When the remnant wanted to flee to Egypt, Jeremiah prophesied against it (Jer 42:15-43:3),
19. He was forced to go with the remnant to Egypt (Jer 43:6, 7), and died there.
20. Tradition says that he was stoned by the remnant.
21. He served as a Prophet for more than 40 years from 627 to about 580 B.C. (1:2-3).

THE HUMAN SIDE OF JEREMIAH

- * The prophecies of Jeremiah offer us a unique insight into the mind and heart of one of God's faithful servants.
- * The book includes numerous personal statements of emotional engagement, painting Jeremiah not merely as a prophet brought on the scene to deliver God's message
- * It also shows Jeremiah as a human being who felt compassion for his people, desired judgment for evildoers, and was concerned about his own safety as well.
- * God chose this man of undeniable courage to speak to the people of Judah on the Lord's behalf—even though they would not listen.
- * In his perseverance and faithfulness, Jeremiah was an example for all who would follow God's call in the face of opposition.
- * Jeremiah never flinched in his confidence that God, who placed him where he was, would vindicate the truth of his message.
- * *"They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you" (Jer. 1:17-19)*

OUR HUMAN SIDE - A SHORT DEVOTION

John 10:30-36

30 I and the Father are one." 31 Then again the Jewish leaders picked up stones to kill him. 32 Jesus said, "At God's direction I have done many a miracle to help the people. For which one are you killing me?" 33 They replied, "Not for any good work, but for blasphemy; you, a mere man, have declared yourself to be God." 34-36 "In your own Law it says that men are gods!" he replied. "So if the Scripture, which cannot be untrue, speaks of those as gods to whom the message of God came, do you call it blasphemy when the one sanctified and sent into the world by the Father says, 'I am the Son of God'?"

Psalm 82:1:

"God presides in the great assembly; he gives judgment among the gods."

However, both of these passages include explanations in the immediate context that clearly do *not* indicate human divinity.

It is followed by a warning that "you will all die like mere men, you will fall like every other ruler" (**Psalm 82:6-7**)

OUR HUMAN SIDE

It is clear from the next three verses that the word “gods” refers to magistrates, judges, and other people who hold positions of authority and rule.

Calling a human magistrate a “god” indicates three things:

- 1) he has authority over other human beings,
- 2) the power he wields as a civil authority is to be feared, and
- 3) he derives his power and authority from God Himself, who is judging the whole earth (verse 8)

- * This use of the word “gods” to refer to humans is found elsewhere in the Old Testament.
- * For ex: when God sent Moses to Pharaoh, He said, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh” ([Exodus 7:1](#)).
- * This simply means that Moses, as the messenger of God, was speaking God’s words and would therefore be God’s representative to the king.
- * The Mighty Prophet Elijah was but a Human.
- * He couldn’t do nothing on his own... He had to PRAY to GOD

James 5:17 -

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.

OUR HUMAN SIDE

Even if we forget our humanness, God remembers who we...

Psalm 103:14-16

For he knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.

Never forget that this was the Temptation of Satan to Eve

Genesis 3:5 -

For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

GOD'S SERVANTS WERE CAUTIOUS

Matthew 3:11 -

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Acts 10:25-26

"As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."

Acts 14:8-18 - Paul and Barnabas at Lystra

THE PURPOSE OF JEREMIAH

The original purposes of Jeremiah are fourfold.

- * **First**, Jeremiah was written to warn Judah of her impending judgment due to their failure to keep covenant.
 - * **Second**, Jeremiah's messages were given to motivate Judah to repentance, calling the exiles back to covenant faithfulness.
 - * **Third**, when Judah failed to repent, Jeremiah called the nation to submit to their divinely ordained discipline.
 - * **Fourth**, Israel's covenantal relationship with the Lord was damaged yet not destroyed and God had not forsaken His people although they had forsaken Him.
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- * **From 627-650 BC**: He prophesied God's Judgment while Judah was threatened by Assyria and Egypt
 - * **From 605-586 BC**: He prophesied God's Judgment while Judah was threatened and besieged by Babylon
 - * **From 586 BC**: He ministered in Jerusalem and Egypt after Judah's downfall

THE PROPHECY FULFILLED

- * Jeremiah was the voice of warning, the watchman who brings attention to hard truths that others would rather ignore.

Jer. 22:6-8: "Thus says the Lord concerning the house of the king of Judah...I will make you a desert, an uninhabited city. I will prepare destroyers against you....And many nations will pass by this city, and all of them will say one to another, "Why has the Lord dealt in this way with that great city?" And they will answer, "Because they abandoned the covenant of the Lord their God."

- * Therefore, the prophet declared that the day was coming when the Temple would be destroyed.
- * The ark of the covenant would be taken away,
- * and the nation that called itself the chosen of Yahweh would be taken into captivity.
- * These statements aroused the anger of the priests and King Jehoiakim.
- * Jeremiah was charged with treason and would probably have been put to death had not some of his friends succeeded in hiding him until the wrath of his enemies subsided.

- * When it was no longer considered safe for him to appear in public, Jeremiah dictated a series of oracles in which the policies of King Jehoiakim and his subordinates were severely criticized, and warnings were given concerning what would happen if these were not changed.
- * The scroll on which these oracles were written was sent to the king by a messenger who saw to it that the document was read aloud in the king's presence.
- * King Jehoiakim was displeased as he listened to the reading.
- * Taking the scroll from the reader, he cut it into shreds and then threw the remnants into a fire.
(36:22)
- * When news of what the king had done reached Jeremiah, he dictated the entire scroll over again, adding a specific warning to Jehoiakim, and sent the new copy back to be read again. (36:28)
- * In 605, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Jerusalem and carried off 10,000 of the most able Jews (including Ezekiel and Daniel).
- * At that point, Jeremiah's role was expanded to bring God's word to the Jews in exile (chapter 29).
- * Among the captured Jews were false prophets who assured the exiles that Babylon's days were numbered and God would never allow Jerusalem to be captured.

- * Jeremiah warned the exiles that they would be in Babylon for 70 years.
- * **29:4-7** - Instead of acting on false hopes, the Jews there were to settle down in the land, build houses, plant gardens, marry off their children – and stop listening to the false prophets.
- * Meanwhile, the remaining inhabitants of Judah continued to refuse God's message.
- * In 586 the Babylonians returned, sacked Jerusalem, pulled down its walls, destroyed its temple stone by stone, and carried off the remaining able-bodied people as captives.
- * Once more, Jeremiah's role changed (chapters 40-45).
- * God kept him in the destroyed city, now governed briefly by Gedaliah, to encourage the new ruler and help the people understand what had happened and how they were to go forward amid the destruction.
- * Yet once more, despite his plea that they would hear God's message, they put their faith in an unfortunate military alliance with Egypt that Babylon quickly defeated.
- * Jeremiah was taken to Egypt where he died.

- * To the end, the prophet had to endure the rulers' stubborn refusal to heed God's messages and the ruinous outcomes that resulted.
- * The final chapters (46-52) deal principally with the judgment God will bring upon all nations, not merely Judah.
- * While God used Babylon against Judah, Babylon would not escape punishment either.
- * Significantly, the book of Jeremiah also provides us the clearest glimpse of the new covenant God intended to make with His people once Christ came to earth.
- * This new covenant would be the means of restoration for God's people, as He would put His law within them, writing it on hearts of flesh rather than on tablets of stone.
- * Rather than fostering our relationship with God through a fixed location like a temple,
- * He promised through Jeremiah that His people would know Him directly, a knowledge that comes through the person of His Son, Jesus Christ ([Jeremiah 31:31-34](#); see also [Hebrews 8:6](#)).

THE IMPORTANCE OF RETURNING TO GOD

- * *Broken spirit* means "to be overwhelmed with sorrow." *Contrite heart* means "to be completely penitent, feeling remorse and affected by guilt, deeply regretful and wishing to atone for sin."
- * The Israelites were zealously religious.
- * However, they erred in isolating sincerity and ceremony away from the truth as revealed in God's Word.
- * The people attended services, flocked to the Temple, performed the rituals, and offered the sacrifices. But they did not worship according to knowledge or cultivate the righteousness of God.
- * David writes, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise" (Psalms 51:17).
- * Verse 16 says, "You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings."
- * There is nothing we can offer God to appease Him when we have sinned.
- * More animal sacrifices were not what God was looking for. God desires true repentance.
- * External religious activity cannot replace internal, heartfelt contrition (1 Samuel 16:7).
- * When we throw ourselves on the mercy of God, He delights to lift us up (Luke 18:13-14).
- * When we openly acknowledge our sin against God, turn from it, and cry out for cleansing, God promises that He will hear us and forgive (1 John 1:9).

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE BOOK

(Difficult to outline because there is no logical or chronological order)

I. Call of prophet during reign of Josiah, Chapter 1

II. Prophecies to Judah and Jerusalem prior to Zedekiah's reign, Chapters 2–20

A. Twofold condemnation of Judah, Chapters 2–3:5

1. Rejected Jehovah

2. Reared their own gods

B. Charge of backsliding during reign of Josiah, Chapters 3:6–6:30

C. Warning delivered in the gate of the Lord's house, Chapters 7–10

D. Israel disobeyed God's covenant made in wilderness, Chapters 11, 12

E. Parable in action – the linen girdle, Chapter 13

F. Backsliding nation judged by drought and famine, Chapters 14, 15

G. Jeremiah forbidden to marry, Chapters 16–17:18

H. Message to king in the gate, Chapter 17:19-27

I. Sign at the potter's house, Chapters 18, 19

J. Jeremiah's persecution, Chapter 20

III. Prophecies during reign of Zedekiah, Chapters 21–29 (Leads to destruction of Jerusalem)

A. Answer to Zedekiah re: Nebuchadnezzar, Chapters 21, 22

B. A bright light in a very dark day, Chapter 23

C. Parable of two baskets of figs, Chapter 24

D. God spells out 70-year captivity, Chapter 25

- E. Message in temple court during reign of Jehoiakim, Chapter 26
- F. Parable of the yokes, Chapters 27, 28
- G. Message of hope to first delegation of captives, Chapter 29

IV. Prophecies regarding future of 12 tribes and Judah's near captivity, Chapters 30–39

- A. Coming of Great Tribulation, Chapter 30
- B. The "I will" chapter, Chapter 31
- C. Jeremiah imprisoned, buys real estate, Chapter 32
- D. Coming kingdom as promised to David, Chapter 33
- E. Zedekiah's captivity foretold, Chapter 34
- F. Rechabites obey God, Chapter 35
- G. Jehoiakim destroys Word of God with knife and fire, Chapter 36
- H. Jeremiah imprisoned again, Chapters 37, 38

- I. Judah goes into captivity; Jeremiah released from prison, Chapter 39

V. Prophecies to remnant left in land after destruction of Jerusalem, Chapters 40–42

VI. Prophecies during Jeremiah's last days in Egypt, Chapters 43–51

- A. To remnant in Egypt, Chapters 43, 44
- B. To Baruch, Chapter 45
- C. To Egypt, Chapter 46
- D. To Philistia, Chapter 47
- E. To Moab, Chapter 48
- F. To Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor and Elam, Chapter 49
- G. To Babylon, Chapters 50, 51

VII. Fulfillment of prophesied destruction of Jerusalem, Chapter 52

CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT

The kings under whom Jeremiah prophesied succeeded each other in the following order:

1) Josiah. 2) Jehoahaz. 3) Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah .4) Jehoiakim. 5) Zedekiah.

Prophecies under Josiah

Jeremiah 1:1-19.
Jeremiah 4:1-6:30.
Jeremiah 2:1-3:5.
Jeremiah 3:6-4:4.
Jeremiah 17:19-27.
Jeremiah 47:1-7.

Under Jehoiakim

Jeremiah 7:1-9:25.
Jeremiah 26:1-24.
Jeremiah 46:2-12.
Jeremiah 10:1-16.
Jeremiah 14:1-15:21.
Jeremiah 16:1-17:18.
Jeremiah 18:1-23.
Jeremiah 19:1-20:13.
Jeremiah 20:14-18.
Jeremiah 23:9-40.

Jeremiah 35:1-19.
Jeremiah 25:1-38.
Jeremiah 36:1-32.
Jeremiah 45:1-5.
Jeremiah 12:14-17.
Jeremiah 10:17-25.

Under Jeconiah

Jeremiah 13:1-27.

Under Zedekiah

Jeremiah 23:1-8.
Jeremiah 11:1-17.
Jeremiah 11:18-12:13.
Jeremiah 24:1-10.
Jeremiah 29:1-32.
Jeremiah 27:1-28:17.
Jeremiah 49:34-39.
Jeremiah 51:59-64.

Jeremiah 21:1-14.
Jeremiah 34:1-7.
Jeremiah 37:1-10.
Jeremiah 34:8-22.
Jeremiah 37:11-21.
Jeremiah 38:1-28.
Jeremiah 39:15-18.
Jeremiah 32:1-44.
Jeremiah 33:1-26.
Jeremiah 39:1-10.

After the destruction of Jerusalem

Jeremiah 39:11-14.
Jeremiah 40:1-41:18.
Jeremiah 42:1-43:7.
Jeremiah 30:1-31:40.

Prophecies delivered in Egypt

Jeremiah 43:8-13.
Jeremiah 44:1-30.
Jeremiah 46:13-28.

Prophecies relative to strange nations

Jeremiah 46:1; Jeremiah 49:14.
Jeremiah 48:1-47.
Jeremiah 49:7-22.
Jeremiah 49:23-27.
Jeremiah 49:28-33.
Jeremiah 50:1-51:64.

Historical Appendix

Jeremiah 52:1-34.